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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016) and 2393 (2017)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the forty-eighth submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015), paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016) and paragraph 6 of resolution 2393 (2017), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on data available to agencies of the United Nations system[1] and from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other relevant sources. Data from agencies of the United Nations system on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 31 January 2018.

[1] Inputs provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

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II. Major developments

Box 1
Key points: January 2018

1. During the reporting period, military activity in parts of the country had a significant impact on the civilian population, resulting in deaths, injuries and displacement, causing damage to civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools, and affecting the ability of United Nations agencies and their partners to deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance.

2. In besieged eastern Ghutah, in Rif Dimashq, near daily shelling of several areas, particularly in the eastern areas of the enclave, and in Duma and Nashabiyah, resulted in civilian deaths and injuries, internal displacement within the besieged area and destruction of civilian infrastructure. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported 124 deaths during the month of January in eastern Ghutah. Shelling was also reported from eastern Ghutah into Damascus; OHCHR reported that 11 people had been killed in Damascus from the shelling during the month (see annex for a full list of casualties reported by OHCHR for January).

3. Intense fighting continued in Idlib, northern Hama and southern Aleppo Governorates, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, as well as large-scale displacement. From 15 December 2017 through 29 January 2018, the displacement of more than 300,000 people was recorded, with those displaced moving to the central and northern parts of Idlib Governorate. Medical facilities were particularly hard hit in Idlib, with 14 attacks against medical facilities verified by the health cluster during the month.

4. Some 66,000 civilians were reported to have returned to Raqqah city since October 2017. The widespread presence of explosive hazards, including unexploded ordnance, landmines and improvised explosive devices, throughout the city continues to pose a significant risk to civilians, as well as to humanitarian workers. According to partners on the ground, more than 500 civilians have died or have been injured since the city was retaken from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in October 2017.

5. The United Nations in Jordan undertook a one-time aid operation on an exceptional basis from 8 to 12 January, delivering emergency life-saving assistance, including food and non-food items, to 50,000 people stranded at Rukban camp along the border between Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

6. In January, United Nations humanitarian assistance reached millions of people in need in the Syrian Arab Republic, including nearly 2 million people who received food assistance through regular deliveries. Access to besieged areas continued to be a challenge, with no convoys to any besieged area for the second month in a row.

3. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria held a special meeting in the framework of the intra-Syrian talks facilitated by the United Nations in Vienna on 25 and 26 January to discuss constitutional issues as one aspect of the full implementation of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). Delegations from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition Syrian Negotiation Commission participated in the talks. The Russian Federation hosted the Congress of the Syrian National Dialogue in Sochi on 30 January, with the support of Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey.

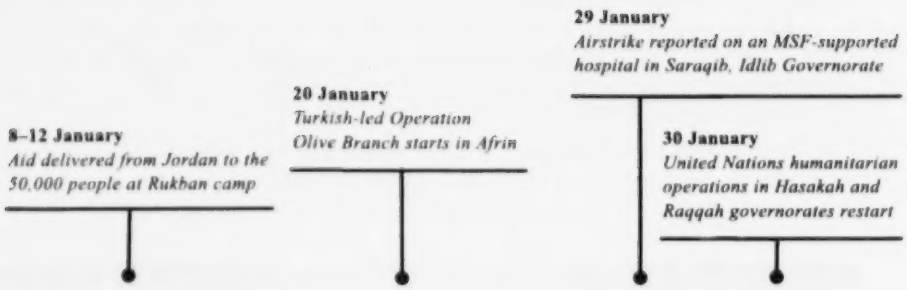
4. Military activity in parts of the country had a significant impact on the civilian population, resulting in civilian deaths, injuries and displacement, as well as causing damage to civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools, and affecting the ability of United Nations agencies and their partners to deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance. Other parts of the country, including areas where local agreements had been reached, oftentimes after heavy military activity between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and non-State armed opposition groups, reportedly remained relatively calm.

5. In besieged eastern Ghutah, in Rif Dimashq, near daily shelling of several areas, particularly in eastern areas of the enclave, and in Duma and Nashabiyah, resulted in civilian deaths and injuries, internal displacement within the besieged area and the destruction of civilian infrastructure. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported 124 deaths during the month of January. Prices for basic goods remain far beyond the purchasing power of most residents of eastern Ghutah. The humanitarian situation inside the besieged enclave was further compounded by the inability of United Nations humanitarian inter-agency convoys to be deployed to the area since 28 November. No medical evacuations took place during the month, although a growing number of people (up to 750), the majority of them women and children, remained in need of evacuation. Through the end of January, 19 people died while awaiting evacuation, and two others died after their evacuation. Attacks on residential neighbourhoods of Damascus city also continued from eastern Ghutah during the reporting period, resulting in deaths, injuries and material damage. OHCHR reported that 11 people had been killed in Damascus as a result of the shelling during the month (see annex for a full list of casualties reported by OHCHR for January).

6. Intense fighting between forces of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and non-State armed opposition groups continued in the north-eastern countryside of Hama Governorate, the southern and south-eastern countryside of Idlib Governorate and the southern countryside of Aleppo Governorate, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries, large-scale displacement and the destruction of civilian infrastructure. From 15 December through 29 January, over 300,000 displacements were recorded, with those displaced moving from all three governorates to the central and northern parts of Idlib Governorate. Many of those forced to flee had been displaced previously. Of the 1.7 million people in need in Idlib Governorate, more than 1 million people had been internally displaced before the recent escalation in violence. Camps for the displaced are overstretched, forcing most of those who have been displaced to seek shelter in some 160 makeshift settlements.

7. Medical facilities were particularly hard hit in Idlib Governorate, with 14 attacks against medical facilities verified by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners during the month of January alone. This included an attack on 29 January on a hospital supported by Médecins Sans Frontières in the Saraqib district of Idlib, a district where 7 of the 14 verified attacks on hospitals occurred. One person was killed and eight others were injured; the hospital is no longer in service. This was the second strike reported on the hospital in nine days. Some of those in the hospital at the time of the airstrike had reportedly just been admitted following an attack on a nearby market hours earlier.

Figure I
Key dates in January 2018


8–12 January
Aid delivered from Jordan to the 50,000 people at Rukban camp
20 January
Turkish-led Operation Olive Branch starts in Afrin
29 January
Airstrike reported on an MSF-supported hospital in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate
30 January
United Nations humanitarian operations in Hasakah and Raqqah governorates restart

Abbreviation: MSF, Medecins Sans Frontières.

8. On 20 January, the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations in New York informed the Secretary-General and the Security Council by letter that Turkey had "initiated a military operation on 20 January 2018 ... aimed at ensuring [Turkey's] border security [and] neutralizing terrorists in Afrin" (see S/2018/53). Turkish artillery shelling and airstrikes reportedly hit areas of Afrin district near the border with Turkey, in addition to other areas held by the Kurdish People's Protection Units. There have been allegations of civilian deaths and injuries, as well as of displacement. Local authorities are also reportedly restricting movement, with civilians not allowed to exit the district at checkpoints. Some 2,000 people have, however, been registered as displaced from Afrin district to elsewhere in Aleppo Governorate since 20 January. The United Nations temporarily suspended its cross-border operations from 21 to 31 January owing to shelling from Afrin into Turkey.

Box 2
Yarmouk camp and Yalda, Babila and Bayt Saham

Yarmouk camp and Yalda, Babila and Bayt Saham form an encircled area of roughly 20 km^2, stretching from Damascus to 5 km south of the city. The control of the area is split between non-State armed groups and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), with the western neighbourhoods of Yarmouk camp, Hajar al-Aswad and Isali largely held by ISIL, and the eastern and southern neighbourhoods of Yalda, Babila, Bayt Saham and Qadam held by non-State armed groups. Tadamun, east of Yarmouk camp, remains a highly contested area.

Prior to the conflict, Yarmouk camp was a Palestinian refugee camp with nearly 150,000 registered Palestinian refugees. Today, the estimated 12,500 people in Yarmouk camp are classified by the United Nations as besieged by ISIL and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, while 29,600 people are estimated to live in hard-to-reach Yalda, Babila and Bayt Saham. The United Nations last reached Yalda, Babila and Bayt Saham on 26 October 2017, when the Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered multisectoral assistance provided by the United Nations for 35,000 people.

Yarmouk camp was last reached by the United Nations on 7 September 2017, when 2,000 people there received health, food and nutritional assistance and non-food items from by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent as part of an agreement between the different besieging actors. A United Nations-Syrian Arab Red Crescent convoy requested for Yarmouk camp under the January/February 2018 plan was not approved by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

9. A total of 66,000 civilians have reportedly returned to Raqqah city since October 2017, including to neighbourhoods that constituted the last stronghold of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters and are therefore particularly heavily mined and riddled with deadly booby traps. The widespread presence of explosive hazards, including unexploded ordnance, landmines and improvised explosive devices, throughout the city continues to pose a significant risk to civilians, as well as to humanitarian workers. The systematic survey, marking and subsequent removal of such explosive hazards is a pre-condition for enabling the safe return of civilians and the safe delivery of humanitarian aid. More than 112 civilians were killed and a further 422 injured in blasts after the city was retaken from ISIL in October 2017. Each week, an average of 50 civilians arrive at trauma centres in Raqqah city after being wounded by improvised explosive devices. In a further alarming trend, a growing number of the victims are children. Humanitarian agencies continue to emphasize that, owing to the high prevalence of landmines, booby traps and explosive remnants of war, Raqqah city is not safe for civilian returns. Owing to these conditions, humanitarian organizations continue to discourage returns to the city and only have a limited presence on the ground.

10. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Syrian Democratic Forces have continued to push ISIL out of areas along the Euphrates river in southern rural Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, although ISIL still controls pockets along the Syrian Arab Republic-Iraq border, along the eastern bank of the Euphrates river and across the south-western border of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate with Homs Governorate. Beyond Raqqah city, mine action partners also express concern about the widespread presence of explosive hazards in areas formerly under ISIL control, which has an impact on the safe return of civilians and hampers the safe delivery of humanitarian aid in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. Reports indicate, however, that the Syrian authorities have declared the Albu Kamal and Mayadin sub-districts in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate as cleared for civilian returns, and that at least 15,000 people have returned to these areas.

11. The United Nations in Jordan undertook a one-time aid operation on an exceptional basis from 8 to 12 January to deliver emergency life-saving assistance, including food and non-food items, to 50,000 people stranded at Rukban camp along the border between Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. At the same time, the United Nations continues to work to reach a sustainable solution for aid deliveries from Damascus. A request for regular access by the United Nations from within the Syrian Arab Republic to support those in need at Rukban camp has been pending since September.

12. The United States Department of Defense publicly reported that in January the United States-led coalition had carried out 276 strikes against ISIL targets in the Governorates of Dayr al-Zawr and Hasakah. All but one of those strikes were near Albu Kamal in Dayr al-Zawr. Additionally, the United States-led coalition publicly reported that on 20 January it had conducted precision strikes in the middle Euphrates River valley region near Sha'fa, and that operations had been conducted in the Dayr al-Zawr towns of Hajin on 2 January, Kharaij and Abu Hammam on 6 January and Kashmah on 12 January.

13. The Ministry of Defence of the Syrian Arab Republic publicly reported that Government forces and their allies had conducted operations in Aleppo, Hama, Idlib and Rif Dimashq Governorates in January. It also reported that on 21 January those forces had captured Abu al-Zuhur military base in Idlib Governorate.

Protection

14. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians and to damage and destroy civilian infrastructure throughout the month. Explosive weapons continued to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring civilians, destroying and damaging vital infrastructure and leaving communities littered with hazards that continued to kill and injure civilians and impede humanitarian access. The use of improvised explosive devices in certain areas added to the complexity of the explosive hazard threat. The large number of civilian casualties and the scale of civilian destruction remain a strong indication that violations of the fundamental rules of distinction, proportionality and precaution, and of the consequent prohibition on the launching of indiscriminate attacks, are continuing. Children are particularly affected by the fighting.

15. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. On the basis of information received by OHCHR, civilian casualties occurred in various Governorates, in possible violation of international humanitarian law. OHCHR has documented alleged incidents perpetrated by parties to the conflict, including government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and their allies, and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

16. In addition to violations documented by OHCHR, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic provided OHCHR with information on alleged violations. In a note verbale received on 1 February, the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office at Geneva provided OHCHR with a list of reported victims and civilians who had been injured between 22 December and 21 January in the Governorates of Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Dar'a, Suwayda', Homs, Hama, Tartus, Ladhiqiyah, Idlib, Aleppo, Dayr al-Zawr, Hasakah, Qunaytirah and Raqqah. A total of 23 civilians, including 2 children, were reported to have been killed, while 175 civilians, including 36 children, were reported to have been injured. The casualties reportedly resulted from mortars and improvised explosive devices.

17. Despite the call made to the Syrian authorities by the Human Rights Council in its resolutions S-18/1 and 19/22 to cooperate with OHCHR, including through the establishment of a field presence with a mandate to protect and promote human rights, OHCHR reporting remains limited, as the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has not granted access to the country.

18. The United Nations and its health partners verified 28 attacks that affected health-care facilities and personnel in January. Seven attacks were in the eastern Ghutah region of Rif Dimashq, comprising four attacks on primary health centres and three attacks that resulted in the killing of three health workers. Sixteen attacks were reported in Idlib, comprising attacks on six hospitals, a blood bank, six primary health centres and an ambulance. Three hospitals in Hama Governorate and one in Aleppo Governorate were attacked. The directorate of health in Dar'a was also hit by an airstrike.

19. Educational facilities also continued to suffer the impact of the fighting. On 12 January in Zamalka, eastern Ghutah, the director of a school was killed by a stray bullet as a result of the ongoing clashes in the area. On 16 January in New Shahba', Aleppo Governorate, a mortar hit a kindergarten, severely injuring a 2-year-old boy and killing a kindergarten staff member, as well as injuring two teachers and one other staff member. The 2-year-old boy later died from his injuries at the hospital.

Humanitarian access

Box 3
Key points for humanitarian access

1. In January, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need, including from within the Syrian Arab Republic. Regular programming reached nearly 2 million people with food assistance through 1,567 deliveries.

2. At the same time, not a single convoy of life-saving relief, food and medical supplies was authorized to any besieged area in January. The last United Nations inter-agency convoy to a besieged location took place on 28 November, to Nashabiyah in eastern Ghutah, providing assistance to only 7,200 people.

3. Cross-border assistance remains a vital part of the humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic. In January, 471 trucks used in 20 consignments delivered life-saving assistance to nearly 670,000 people in need in northern and southern areas of the country, through cross-border deliveries. On 31 January, the United Nations resumed its cross-border deliveries from the Bab al-Hawa border crossing point in Turkey into Idlib Governorate. A total of 25 trucks delivered food and medical supplies into the Syrian Arab Republic on 31 January, the first delivery following the United Nations decision on 20 January to temporarily halt deliveries as a result of security concerns.

4. In Hasakah Governorate, an agreement was reached on 30 January to allow 7 out of 11 national non-governmental organizations partnering with the United Nations to resume humanitarian deliveries, after a month in which most United Nations humanitarian assistance had come to a halt owing to restrictions from Syrian and local authorities.

5. In Raqqah city, conditions remain unsafe for the return of displaced people. Among people trying to return home, more than 500 civilians have died or been injured by unexploded ordinance. Medical and other essential services are limited, and access for humanitarian workers to the city remains almost impossible.

20. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas of the country as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions imposed on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict. In particular, access by the United Nations and its partners to people living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remained a critical concern. On average in 2017, 27 per cent of beneficiaries scheduled for assistance under specific requests were reached through inter-agency cross-line convoys each month (see figure II). Bureaucratic impediments, such as the non-issuance of facilitation letters by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, continued to be a significant factor in delays or non-deliveries, despite the creation of a tripartite coordination mechanism to address such problems. The last meeting of the mechanism was on 12 December 2017, at which time there were no breakthroughs on access-related issues.

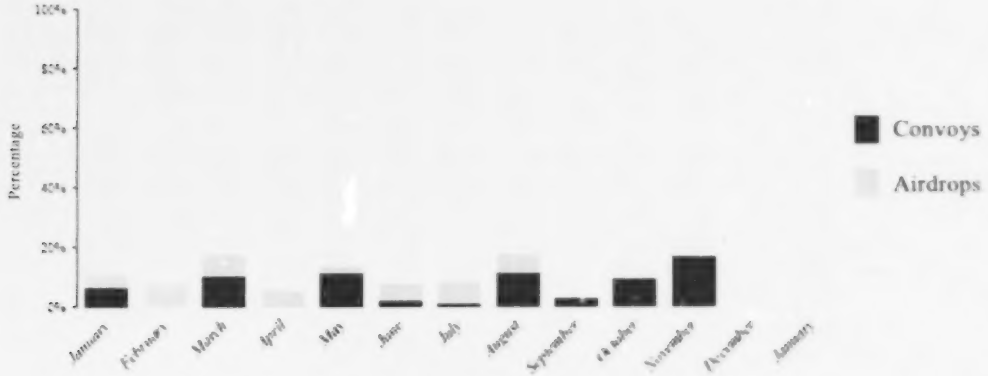
21. The United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for January and February 2018 requested access to 26 locations in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, with the aim of reaching a total of 844,720 people. Inter-agency convoys are prepared for areas with multisectoral needs where access is limited to ensure that United Nations support is needs-based. Nevertheless, in January no inter-agency convoy was authorized to deploy to any hard-to-reach or besieged locations (see figure III). The last United

Nations inter-agency convoy to a besieged location took place on 28 November 2017, to Nashabiyah in eastern Ghutah, providing assistance to only 7,200 people. This is the worst situation regarding United Nations access to besieged locations since 2015.

22. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency deliveries to locations throughout the country during the reporting period. Single-agency deliveries are undertaken in areas where access is less challenging. In January, the World Food Programme submitted 1,624 official requests to the authorities to obtain facilitation letters for the transport of food assistance to locations throughout the country, of which 1,567 requests were approved. A total of 56 facilitation letters to dispatch food assistance to the north-east of the country were rejected, affecting the delivery of food assistance for over 260,000 people. UNHCR submitted 29 facilitation letters for the movement of core relief items and livelihood kits. All were approved.

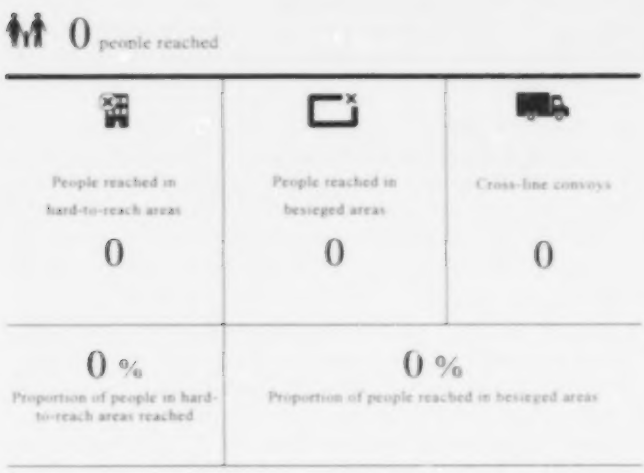
Figure II

United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas



23. The United Nations and its partners continue to provide support to those who have been displaced by fighting in and around Raqqah as part of a coordinated response in the Syrian Arab Republic. The regular programming of United Nations agencies was put on hold for most of January, however, owing to restrictions from Syrian and local authorities. Local authorities in the north-east of the country held up humanitarian convoys twice at the checkpoint with government-controlled areas in eastern Aleppo, halting the supply route for assistance from within the Syrian Arab Republic to the region. Furthermore, local authorities required non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to register with the Kurdish Autonomous Administration. The situation was further compounded by the refusal of the governor of Hasakah to issue facilitation letters for United Nations deliveries. While an agreement was reached with all parties to allow the resumption of humanitarian activity on 30 January, assistance was restricted for much of the month.

Figure III
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations, January 2018



Humanitarian response

24. United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners reached millions of people in need in January through all available access modalities, including (a) regular programming from within the Syrian Arab Republic, whereby humanitarian deliveries reached those in need without crossing conflict lines, (b) cross-line operations, whereby assistance from within the country was delivered across conflict lines and (c) cross-border deliveries, whereby assistance was provided to those in need from Jordan and Turkey (see table 1). In addition to the United Nations and its partners, NGOs continued to deliver life-saving assistance to people in need. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services where possible.

Table 1
People reached by the United Nations and other organizations through all modalities in January 2018

Organization	*Number of people reached*
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	20 000
International Organization for Migration	60 489
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	2 688 000
United Nations Children's Fund	1 300 000
United Nations Development Programme	105 178
United Nations Population Fund	330 000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	360 000
World Food Programme	2 400 000
World Health Organization	826 000

25. During the reporting period, cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016) and 2393 (2017) (see figure IV). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including its content and destination, and the number of beneficiaries expected to be reached.

26. Since cross-border operations began in July 2014, following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), the United Nations has conducted more than 734 cross-border consignments, using more than 18,625 trucks (12,756 by way of Bab al-Hawa and 1,847 by way of Bab al-Salam from Turkey, and 4,022 by way of Ramtha from Jordan). The United Nations cross-border operations complement the aid provided by international and Syrian NGOs that provide services to millions more from neighbouring countries.

27. In January, the United Nations and its implementing partners delivered food assistance to more than 650,000 people through cross-border deliveries from Turkey and Jordan (see table 2). Moreover, the United Nations conducted health and medical deliveries, providing more than 223,000 treatments through the cross-border mechanism. In the northern part of the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF improved water quality and sanitation for 168,000 people through the repair and rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems, and the distribution of hygiene kits, jerry cans and water purification tablets. In addition, UNICEF screened nearly 40,000 children and pregnant and lactating women for acute malnutrition. Of the children screened, 208 were treated for severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF also enrolled 13,328 children, ranging from 5 to 17 years of age, in formal education. In the southern Governorates of Dar'a and Qunaytirah, more than 440,000 people were able to access clean water following maintenance operations for water and sanitation systems. Of these, 62,380 people were reached with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All interventions such as household water treatment, water vouchers and rehabilitation and repair of sanitation facilities and of water systems. Humanitarian partners also continued to provide nutritional services in 12 communities in Dar'a Governorate and 10 communities in Qunaytirah Governorate. A total of 6,210 children under the age of 5 were screened for acute malnutrition. Of the children screened, 40 were identified as suffering from moderate acute malnutrition and 17 as suffering from severe acute malnutrition. Those identified and diagnosed were treated through therapeutic and supplementary nutrition programmes in six health centres and one mobile clinic. In addition, 1,426 pregnant and lactating women were screened for acute malnutrition, of whom 47 received necessary treatment.

28. Also during the reporting period, the third oral polio vaccine campaign from inside the Syrian Arab Republic took place between 14 and 18 January, with a total of 665,736 children under the age of 5 vaccinated in Damascus, Hasakah, Aleppo and Rif Dimashq.

29. The first round of cash assistance in 2018 was launched by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on 14 January, targeting up to 418,000 Palestine refugees in need of assistance. By 31 January 2018, a total of 196,592 beneficiaries had received assistance, representing 47 per cent of the target for the round. Beneficiaries are paid $32/month and receive two months' worth of assistance per round for a total of $64.

30. UNHCR and its protection partners continued to raise awareness of the importance of civil documentation, as well as of the registration of births, marriages and other events. During the reporting period, 13,825 internally displaced persons in Damascus, Rif Dimashq, Suwayda', Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Tartus, Ladhiqiyah, Homs, Hama, Aleppo and Hasakah Governorates directly benefited from the UNHCR legal

assistance programme. Moreover, there are now a total of 90 community centres, 7 satellite centres and 58 mobile units functioning, supported by 2,190 outreach volunteers and providing a wide range of protection-related services to 2.3 million people in 12 governorates.

31. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations during the reporting period, monitoring 471 trucks used in 20 consignments by six United Nations entities, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The United Nations provides 48-hour notice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for all shipments. Once in the country, United Nations partners ensure that shipments arrive at the designated warehouses. Independent third-party companies contracted by the United Nations ensure independent verification of the assistance arriving at the warehouses and also monitor the distribution and/or service provision. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Jordan and Turkey.

Figure IV
Number of beneficiaries targeted by the United Nations and its partners by cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, January 2018

(Thousands)

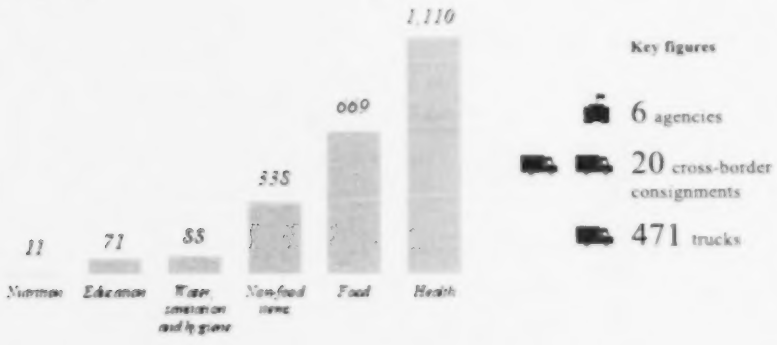


Table 2
Number of targeted beneficiaries through cross-border deliveries by sector and by district, January 2018

Governorate	*District*	*Education*	*Food*	*Health*	*Non-food items*	*Nutrition*	*Water, sanitation and hygiene*
Aleppo	Bab	0	0	0	37 500	11 100	0
Aleppo	I'zaz	4 500	27 000	3 400	3 000	0	13 814
Aleppo	Jarabulus	0	0	0	1 500	0	28 832
Aleppo	Jabal Sim'an	22 500	18 000	12 485	27 000	0	4 500
Suwayda'	Suwayda'	0	350	0	0	0	0
Dar'a	Sanamayn	0	0	0	5 000	0	0
Dar'a	Dar'a	0	171 154	40 400	43 266	0	0
Dar'a	Izra'	0	74 861	14 000	14 910	0	0
Hama	Suqaylibiyah	0	5 000	0	0	0	0
Idlib	Ma'arrah	0	79 625	13 085	0	0	0
Idlib	Ariha	0	0	180	0	0	0
Idlib	Harim	13 500	204 525	965 480	59 299	0	4 000

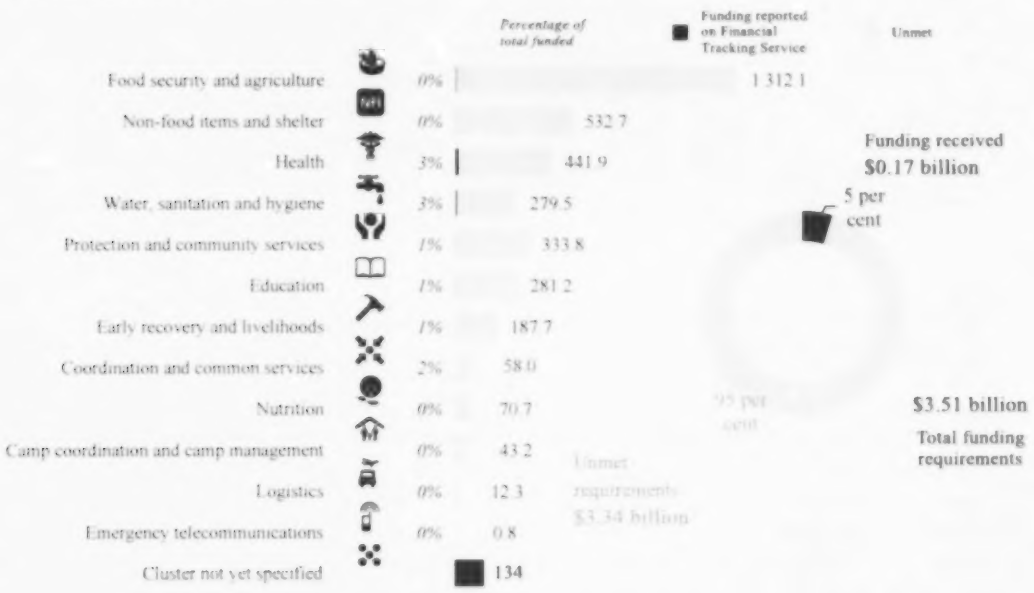
Governorate	*District*	*Education*	*Food*	*Health*	*Non-food items*	*Nutrition*	*Water, sanitation and hygiene*
Idlib	Idlib	30 690	36 000	49 520	12 000	0	29 400
Idlib	Jisr al-Shughur	0	7 500	120	0	0	7 300
Qunaytirah	Fiq	0	2 125	0	10 200	0	0
Qunaytirah	Qunaytirah	0	43 210	11 165	124 739	0	0

32. Throughout the month of January, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian financing

33. As at 31 January, the 2018 humanitarian response plan for the Syrian Arab Republic was 4.8 per cent funded, with $168 million of the $3.51 billion requested under the plan received.

Figure V
Humanitarian response plan funding, January 2018
(Millions of United States dollars)


Percentage of total funded
Funding reported on Financial Tracking Service
Unmet
Food security and agriculture 0% 1 312 1
Non-food items and shelter 0% 532 7
Health 3% 441 9
Water, sanitation and hygiene 3% 279.5
Protection and community services 1% 333 8
Education 1% 281 2
Early recovery and livelihoods 1% 187 7
Coordination and common services 2% 58.0
Nutrition 0% 70 7
Camp coordination and camp management 0% 43 2
Logistics 0% 12 3
Emergency telecommunications 0% 0 8
Cluster not yet specified 134
Funding received
$0.17 billion
5 per cent
95 per cent
Unmet requirements
$3.34 billion
$3.51 billion
Total funding requirements

Visas and registrations

34. A total of 58 new United Nations visa requests were submitted to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in January. Of those, 29 were approved and 29 remain pending. Of the 31 visa applications submitted in November and December 2017, 2 were approved in January, while 29 remain pending. A total of 66 United Nations visa renewal requests were submitted in January, of which 43 were approved, while 23 remain pending. An additional three requests for visa renewals submitted in late December were approved in January. For some United Nations entities in the

Syrian Arab Republic, a significant number of staff are not in place or cannot be replaced owing to the non-issuance of visas for months despite formal requests.

35. A total of 23 international NGOs are registered with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to operate in the country.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

36. Programmes of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are implemented in areas affected by frequent clashes among belligerents, airstrikes, regular exchange of indirect artillery fire and asymmetric attacks.

37. Since the start of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 22 staff members of the United Nations or agencies of the United Nations system, of whom 18 were staff members of UNRWA, 66 were staff members or volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and 8 were staff members or volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many staff members of international and national NGOs are also reported to have been killed.

38. A total of 27 staff members of agencies and programmes of the United Nations system (1 staff member of the United Nations Development Programme and 26 UNRWA staff members) are being detained or are missing.

39. Two UNRWA vehicles were slightly damaged by shrapnel when a mortar landed on Amin Street in the Alliance area of Damascus, bringing the total number of damaged assets belonging to UNRWA to 44 facilities and 25 vehicles since the beginning of the conflict.

III. Observations

40. The Syrian people are suffering through one of the most violent periods in nearly seven years of conflict, with civilians continuing to bear the brunt of intensified military activity, heavy fighting, airstrikes and besiegement. I am alarmed at new reports of alleged chemical attacks and by the escalation of military activity in eastern Ghouta and Idlib, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries and in the destruction of hospitals, schools and other civilian infrastructure. There were 28 verified attacks on medical facilities in January alone. Yet, international humanitarian law requires that all parties to the conflict respect and protect medical facilities and personnel, and that they take constant care to spare all civilians and civilian objects. All parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic must strictly abide by their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions. I call on all parties to work for an immediate and unconditional de-escalation of violence and to exercise restraint.

41. It is time to see progress in the key areas highlighted by my Emergency Relief Coordinator following his first visit to the Syrian Arab Republic from 9 to 12 January 2018. These include the finalization of the United Nations humanitarian response plan for 2018, agreement to the medical evacuation of hundreds of critically ill people trapped in besieged eastern Ghouta, agreement to three or four United Nations and Syrian Arab Red Crescent cross-line convoys each week, agreement to United Nations-supported aid convoys from Damascus to Rukban camp in the south-east of the country, and more effective arrangements to enable the United Nations to support the work of NGOs. I call on all Member States to support the United Nations in its call for progress in these key areas, and for those with influence over the parties to work towards this goal.

42. Nevertheless, progress on these issues remains to be seen. The level of humanitarian access remains catastrophic, in particular to the 5.6 million Syrians in acute need. No convoys have reached a besieged area in more than two months; this is the worst situation regarding United Nations access to besieged locations since 2015. There were also limitations on access for all modalities of assistance delivery in January. Medical evacuations continue to be urgently required. International humanitarian law is clear that medical evacuations are an obligation based on medical need alone.

43. Accountability for serious violations is a requirement under international law and central to achieving sustainable peace in the Syrian Arab Republic. I reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call upon all parties to the conflict, Member States, civil society and the United Nations system as a whole to cooperate fully with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

44. The presence of the United Nations at the Congress of the Syrian National Dialogue in Sochi on 30 January was based on a common understanding between the Russian Federation and the United Nations on the nature and outcome of the meeting and its contribution to the United Nations-led talks in Geneva. The Sochi final statement (see S/2018/121) embraced a vision of the Syrian Arab Republic for all Syrians, as reflected by the 12 principles put forward by my Special Envoy in 2017. It affirmed that the mandate, terms of reference, powers, rules of procedure and selection criteria for the composition of a constitutional committee are to be reached under United Nations auspices in Geneva in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), which mandates the United Nations to set a schedule and process for drafting a new constitution. It affirmed that such a committee should, at the very least, comprise the Government, opposition representatives in the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva, Syrian experts, civil society, independent entities, tribal leaders and women, in addition to an adequate representation of the ethnic and religious components of the Syrian Arab Republic.

45. My Special Envoy will now draw on the Sochi outcome to meet our shared goal: the full implementation of resolution 2254 (2015) and of the Geneva Communiqué. I call on the Government and opposition delegations to the United Nations-led intra-Syrian talks, and all States with influence over the parties, to cooperate with my Special Envoy and the United Nations in this important endeavour. I also emphasize that a safe, calm and neutral environment is needed for constitutional and electoral processes to unfold. The legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people depend upon it. I also call for progress with regard to the detainees, abductees and missing people.

46. I must reiterate that progress towards a political settlement needs to be accompanied by progress on the ground for the Syrian people. Syrians need a sustained ceasefire, which must be accompanied by strict respect for international law, in particular the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access based on need, and medical evacuations for the wounded and sick.

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, January 2018*

Damascus and Rif Dimashq Governorates

- On 2 January, ground-based strikes hit a popular market in opposition-controlled Duma, reportedly killing two male civilians.
- On 2 January, airstrikes hit a residential area in opposition-held Harasta, allegedly killing four civilians from a single family, including a woman, a boy and a girl and her mother.
- On 3 January between 1930 and 2015, several airstrikes hit residential areas in the centre of Misraba, damaging or destroying several residential buildings. At least 19 civilians (seven men, nine women, two girls and a boy) were allegedly killed in the shelling, including nine people from a single family. OHCHR received reports that one of the airstrikes hit in the vicinity of the incident as the first responders were operating, reportedly killing one volunteer and injuring another. An estimated 80 civilians, many of them women and children, were allegedly injured in the incident. The rescue team extracted 15 civilians from the rubble.
- On 3 January, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in opposition-held Bayt Siwa, reportedly killing a 3-year-old girl.
- On 3 January around 1945, an airstrike hit a residential building in opposition-controlled Irbin, resulting in its complete collapse and allegedly killing six civilians from a single family from the area, including both parents, two boys and a girl.
- On 4 January around 1400, two ground-based strikes hit in the vicinity of a bakery in the Imarah neighbourhood in the old city of Damascus. One of the rockets exploded, reportedly killing a woman and injuring 13 other civilians.
- On 6 January around 1500, airstrikes reportedly hit a medical facility in Mudayra, reportedly rendering the facility inoperable.
- On 6 January around 1400, several airstrikes hit a residential area of opposition-held Hamuriyah in the vicinity of a shopping area, reportedly killing 17 civilians, including four women, three boys and two girls, in addition to injuring an estimated 50 others. Strikes reportedly damaged or destroyed several residential buildings and shops, allegedly resulting in the displacement of several dozen families.
- On 8 January around 1400, two consecutive airstrikes and numerous ground-based strikes reportedly hit a residential area in the vicinity of a popular market in Duma, reportedly killing 12 civilians, including five boys and a girl.

* In line with Security Council resolution 2258 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground and the incidents that occurred during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate relates to compliance with Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Cessation of Hostilities of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- On 8 January in the afternoon, several ground-based strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Saqba, reportedly killing five civilians, including a boy.
- On 8 January in the afternoon, a ground-based strike hit a residential and shopping area in Hamuriyah, allegedly killing an elderly woman and injuring at least seven other civilians.
- On 8 January, airstrikes and ground-based strikes hit a residential area in Mudayra, reportedly killing four civilians, including a boy, a girl and an elderly man, and seriously injuring at least five other civilians, including a child.
- On 9 January around 1045, airstrikes hit a residential area in Saqba, causing the collapse of a building and allegedly killing three civilians, including two boys, and injuring at least 30 other civilians, including numerous women and children.
- On 9 January around 1200, airstrikes and ground-based strikes hit a residential area of Hamuriyah, reportedly killing 24 civilians, including eight women (one of whom was pregnant), six boys and six girls, and injuring at least 30 others, including 15 civilians extracted from the rubble by local first responders. Strikes destroyed several residential buildings, displacing at least 30 families.
- On 9 January, ground-based strikes hit a residential area of the old city of Damascus, reportedly killing at least two civilians, including a woman, and injuring more than 15 other civilians.
- On 12 January, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in Hamuriyah, allegedly killing five civilians from a single family (three of them children, aged 2, 8 and 12) and damaging a residential building.
- On 15 January around 1330, ground-based strikes hit a residential area of Misraba, reportedly killing a male civilian and injuring four other civilians.
- On 20 January around 1015, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in Hamuriyah, and allegedly killing three civilians and injuring at least five others, including a civilian who died the next day.
- On 20 January in the morning, ground-based strikes hit a local market in Duma, reportedly killing a male civilian and injuring at least two others. The location of the incident was hit by another ground-based strike as the local first responder team was providing first aid and evacuating civilians, allegedly killing one first responder and injuring another.
- On 20 January, several residential areas of Duma were hit by ground-based strikes, reportedly killing eight civilians, including a woman, and injuring at least seven other civilians.
- On 22 January, several ground-based strikes hit a residential area in Bab Tuma in the old city of Damascus, reportedly killing eight civilians, including a boy, a girl and two women, and wounding at least 20 other civilians, including a 15-year-old girl, who lost one of her feet.
- On 28 January in the morning, ground-based strikes hit residential areas of Duma, allegedly killing five civilians, including a woman and a girl, and injuring five other civilians, two of them children.

Dar'a Governorate

- On 10 January, the Khalid ibn al-Walid Army conducted a ground incursion in opposition-controlled B'ir Bakar village, which led to armed clashes with armed opposition groups affiliated with the Free Syrian Army. Three civilians,

including a boy and a woman, were allegedly killed in the crossfire and at least seven other civilians, three of them children, were injured.

- On 17 January around 1100, several ground-based strikes hit a residential area in the centre of opposition-controlled Nawa, reportedly killing three civilians, including a woman and a nine-year-old boy, and injuring five other civilians.
- On 22 January, an improvised explosive device allegedly killed a secondary school teacher as he was driving in the vicinity of opposition-controlled Da'il town. No party claimed responsibility for the attack. According to the Syrian Arab News Agency, the victim had been involved with the local reconciliation committee.
- On 27 January, a shepherd was reportedly killed by a ground-based strike that hit the vicinity of Da'il.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 9 January, a woman and her female child were allegedly killed when airstrikes hit Jazraya village in southern Aleppo Governorate.
- On 15 January, two women were reportedly killed when airstrikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Arnaz village in the western rural area of the Governorate.
- On 16 January between 1100 and 1200, ground-based strikes hit the wahat al-Tufula kindergarten in the Shahba' neighbourhood of Government-controlled Aleppo city, allegedly killing one civilian (the kindergarten bus driver) and injuring five others (a female teacher and four children).
- On 18 January, ground-based strikes reportedly hit a psychiatric hospital in opposition-held I'zaz town in northwest Aleppo, allegedly wounding 11 patients. The facility hosts around 200 patients.
- Also on 18 January, shelling of the Shatt checkpoint on the I'zaz-Afrin road reportedly injured three civilians travelling on the road.
- On 19 January, a woman and her female child were allegedly killed when ground-based strikes hit the main street in opposition-controlled Bab city in eastern Aleppo Governorate.
- On 21 January, airstrikes hit in the vicinity of Anabkeh poultry farm in Jalbara village, Shirawa district of rural Afrin, reportedly killing 11 civilians, including one woman, two boys aged between 1 and 6 years and three girls between ages 6 and 8, and injuring at least nine other civilians. Those affected by the airstrikes were reportedly internally displaced persons from the Ma'arrat al-Nu'man area of Idlib. Turkish armed forces report that no air or land attacks took place in this area on this date.
- On 21 January, airstrikes hit a residential area of Zammar village in southern Aleppo and allegedly killed six civilians, including three women and two children.
- On 23 January, five civilians, including two women and a boy, were allegedly killed by shelling of the Jindayris residential district in western Afrin. Turkish armed forces report that the area did not come under fire during this operation.
- On 25 January during the night, ground-based strikes reportedly hit a civilian house in the Ma'batli district of rural Afrin, reportedly killing seven civilians, including three women, and injuring at least four other civilians, including two

women. Turkish armed forces report that no air or land attacks took place in this area on this date.

Idlib and Hama Governorates

- On 15 January, a video was posted on the Internet reportedly showing a Levant Liberation Organization fighter standing next to a handcuffed man who had allegedly been abducted by the group in Rasm al-Ward village, southern rural Idlib. The fighter called the abductee a "pig and Sunni apostate" for joining the Syrian Arab Army and entering Idlib, and told a couple described as the parents of three men who had been killed to avenge their sons by killing him. The abductee was then shot by the man and the woman, and the fighter stated this was "in revenge of their three 'sons' killed by Government forces".
- On 18 January at around 1600, airstrikes hit a blood bank in opposition-controlled Saraqib city, allegedly causing significant material damage and rendering the facility inoperable.
- On 20 January at around 1800, airstrikes hit a first responder centre in Saraqib city, reportedly causing significant material damage to the building, as well as to equipment.
- On 21 January at around 1600, airstrikes hit residential areas of opposition-controlled Khan Shaykhun, allegedly killing four civilians, one of them a boy, and injured at least five other civilians, including two women and a boy.
- On 21 January at around 1600, several airstrikes hit different areas of Saraqib town in eastern Idlib, including a hospital, reportedly injuring at least three medical staff and extensively damaging the second floor of the facility. The hospital was closed and patients evacuated to other areas, including Idlib city. A school near the hospital also reportedly sustained material damage as a result of the airstrike.
- On 21 January at around 1600, airstrikes hit a private university north of Saraqib, reportedly killing a male technician working in the university who was standing by the entrance gate when it was hit and injuring three students, mainly from glass fragments. The airstrikes reportedly hit the entrance, an amphitheatre, the professors' building, dormitories and the sports building, causing significant material damage. Classes at the facility, which hosts around 5,000 students, were suspended and the university temporarily closed.
- On 23 January, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Jisr al-Shughur, allegedly killing two brothers and injuring six other civilians, including two women and two children from the same family. The victims had previously been displaced from Hama.
- On 24 January, airstrikes hit the village of Sanghara near opposition-controlled Ariha, reportedly killing seven civilians, including two women, a boy and a girl, all from the same family, and injuring eight others.
- On the afternoon of 28 January, airstrikes hit residential areas in opposition-controlled Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, reportedly killing six civilians, including three women, a girl and a boy.
- On 29 January at around 0300, airstrikes hit a residential area north of Ma'saran town in Ma'arrat al-Nu'man district, allegedly killing a mother and her four daughters, aged 15, 12, 8 and 5 years. The strikes also allegedly injured four civilians, including a 2-year-old boy from the same family and a 73-year-old man.

- At approximately 0700 on 29 January, airstrikes hit a wholesale potato market north of Saraqib city, reportedly killing 14 civilians, including one woman, and injuring around 15 other civilians. Six trucks filled with potatoes, as well as a few shops, were destroyed by the strikes.
- On 29 January at around 0930, airstrikes hit the entrance of a hospital south of Saraqib city, allegedly killing a male civilian working as a guard and injuring eight others, including a doctor, a nurse and three journalists present to interview those injured from the market incident earlier that day. Significantly damaged by the strikes, the hospital had previously been hit on 21 January and is not currently operational, so the critically injured had to be transferred to other medical facilities.
- On the afternoon of 29 January at around 1330, airstrikes hit a residential area in Saraqib city, as well as a bakery, reportedly killing a boy and injuring two other civilians.
- On the morning of 30 January, airstrikes hit the main Ariha market west of Idlib, allegedly killing at least 13 civilians, including a woman and her two sons, and injuring at least 15 others.
- On 30 January, airstrikes hit residential areas of Khan Shaykhun, reportedly injuring 12 civilians, including women and children.

Dayr al-Zawr Governorate

- On 8 January, two civilians from Kasrmah village in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr Governorate were allegedly killed by unexploded ordnance as they were walking in the Matha neighbourhood in the village.
- On 13 January, airstrikes hit the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-controlled village of Hajin in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, reportedly killing five civilians, including one woman.
- On 13 January, one civilian was allegedly killed when a Syrian Democratic Forces fighter shot him after he failed to stop at a checkpoint controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces in Jazrat al-Buhamid village in the Kasra District of western Dayr al-Zawr.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 15 January, four civilians were killed as a result of unexploded ordnance, including one inside a residence in Raqqah city and one by the railway in northern Raqqah city.